



---

Trends in Children's Literature in West Germany

Reviewed work(s):

Source: *Journal of Reading*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Oct., 1984), p. 27

Published by: [International Reading Association](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40007586>

Accessed: 31/10/2012 08:13

---

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at  
<http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



*International Reading Association* is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of Reading*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

ranging from kindergarten through college. Students can use their own words. Using a game format, the student must unscramble and spell the word correctly before time runs out.

*Bank Street Writer.* Bank Street Writer, San Raphael, California 94901, USA. Requires 48K.

An easy-to-learn word processing

program for junior and senior high school students. Has all the basic functions of more sophisticated and costly word processing programs. All directions to the user are printed on the screen. A tutorial program (included on the diskette) simplifies learning to use the program.

## *Trends in children's literature in West Germany*

The programme of reading material which some 150 publishing firms in the Federal Republic of Germany is now offering young readers has become immeasurable. It ranges from fairy tales, classical and modern, and adventure stories to science fiction for the young. Lavish picture books with illustrations by leading artists are still in great demand. Animal books continue to enjoy great popularity although, here, the trend towards sensitively written non-fiction books with illustrations is becoming apparent.

Ever since Michael Ende published his fairy tale novel entitled *Die unendliche Geschichte* (Endless Story) and whetted young appetites for fantastic narrative, countless prose works in this style have come onto the market. The artistic intertwining of science fiction and imaginative fairy tale represents the main trend in children's books at the present time.

Apart from children's books in the traditional style (which includes religious literature), an increasing number of books dealing with young persons' current problems is being published. There are, for instance, countless books on the subjects of environmental conservation, peace and social minorities. Frank Ruprecht's book entitled *Die vier Könige* (The Four Kings) illustrates how fantasy and reality can be linked in a readable manner. By clever use of illustration and language, the author tells how four kings, obsessed by greed and stupid by nature, destroy a blossoming, green island.

Heinz Knappe also deals with the problem of the environment in his novel *Bei Hamburg leichter Niederschlag* (Light rain near Hamburg). The author was awarded the *Oldenburger Kinder- und Jugendpreis* last year. This prize is awarded annually to young authors for their first publication in the youth literature sector.

And yet the continually postulated "realistic" children's and young persons' books have come under fire. Iris Schürmann-Mock, who analyses German books for children and young persons in a monthly press service has come to the conclusion that "despite a number of attractively got-up books, children rarely appear as the main figures."

Children also often had different ideas from adults on the exciting contents of a book. "They like *Kitsch*, such as a prince rescuing a princess." In conclusion Iris Schürmann-Mock states that many authors of young persons' books fail to reach their reading public by "ignoring the desire for a romantic dream world."

Reprinted from *Bildung und Wissenschaft*, 1983, Number 7/8(e), pp. 141-42.